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*Governor*



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## **Baker-Polito Administration Announces Transition to Improved Patient Care at Bridgewater State Hospital**

**BOSTON** – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced that state officials oversaw the transition to a cultural change and new levels of patient care at Bridgewater State Hospital (BSH) as outlined earlier this year. Early on Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, Correct Care Solutions of Tennessee began providing mental health, medical and patient safety services at the forensic psychiatric facility for males and BSH correction officers were re-assigned to prison facilities throughout the Commonwealth.

The transition brought about significant reforms, such as an increase in the number of clinical staff and the closing of the Intensive Treatment Unit (ITU) in favor of providing treatment in the housing units. Correction Officers will continue to provide perimeter security at the BSH facility and transportation services for hospital patients, but will not have day to day interaction with patients. In addition, two specialty mental health units were opened at the Old Colony Correctional Center on the Bridgewater Complex to provide continued intensive mental health services to the state criminally sentenced population who were once treated at the Bridgewater State Hospital. As part of Governor Baker's Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposal, the administration has prioritized \$37 million for the clinical services contract at Bridgewater State Hospital to ensure all patients receive appropriate clinical care.

"This administration is committed to real change and to improving the treatment of individuals with serious mental illness at Bridgewater State Hospital," said **Governor Charlie Baker**. "This significant transition means that patients at the hospital facility will receive the care from staff with behavioral health expertise while correction

officers will continue to provide perimeter security.”

“The handover of patient care as laid out in our contract with Correct Care Solutions is an important milestone in the history of Bridgewater State Hospital and we are proud to be partners in this successful transition whose intent is to bring about a culture change that results in a new level of care,” **said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Dan Bennett**. “This would not have been possible without the cooperation of the Massachusetts Corrections Officer Federated Union (MCOFU), the Bridgewater State Hospital Administration, and continuing support from the Governor’s Office.”

“The administration prioritized funding the new clinical contract at Bridgewater State Hospital to better address the clinical health needs of patients,” **said Administration and Finance Secretary Kristen Lepore**.

“Inpatient management services are now provided by clinically trained, trauma informed, non-uniformed direct care staff as part of DOC’s contract with Correct Care Solutions,” **said Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders**. “This smooth transition of care is a welcome change at Bridgewater and the Department of Mental Health will continue to consult with DOC on all aspects of mental health care and treatment for patients.”

Correct Care Solutions (CCS) was selected based on its extensive experience in treating individuals with serious behavioral health needs and for its specific knowledge of the Bridgewater State Hospital facility. The company is recognized as a national leader in the reduction of the use of seclusion and restraint and has significantly reduced rates of seclusion and restraint at other psychiatric hospitals where it oversees patient care. The contract was awarded to CCS earlier this year.

#### **About Bridgewater State Hospital:**

Bridgewater State Hospital was created by statute as a prison and mental health facility and is designated by statute for commitment of men with mental illness who require treatment in a strict security environment. BSH is accredited by the American Correctional Association and Joint Commission as a behavioral health facility and receives more than 700 admissions per year and the campus consists of 12 buildings on nearly 22 acres. The hospital serves only men who are involved in the criminal justice system – either have been charged with a crime and require evaluation, or have been convicted and sentenced, but require inpatient psychiatric treatment. The current population is 209 men: one third committed for evaluation (e.g., competency to stand trial, determination of criminal responsibility); two thirds committed for treatment (commitment periods range from six months to one year ordered by court, and may be extended at the end of each period). All are deemed by a court to be a

danger to themselves or others by reason of mental illness, and require the strict security of BSH.

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